

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY NEA:ARDAY:TH
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NSC:WQUANDT
S/S : MR. TARNOFF

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O P 251346Z APR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
USMISSION NATO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

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EXDIS - FOR AMBASSADORS AND CHARGES FROM SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, SY
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SUBJECT: VISIT TO WASHINGTON OF SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER
KHADDAM

1. PLEASE CONVEY TO YOUR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS THE
FOLLOWING POINTS CONCERNING THE KHADDAM VISIT. (WE WILL
TRY TO HAVE FOR YOU WITHIN A FEW DAYS A REPORT ON THE

APRIL 25-26 TALKS WITH HUSSEIN, AND LEAVE IT TO YOU WHETHER TO COMBINE THESE IN BRIEFING YOUR GOVERNMENTS.)

-- THE APRIL 21-23 DISCUSSIONS OF PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM WERE IN EFFECT THE FIRST STAGE OF THE PRESIDENT'S CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT. THEY WERE IN PART PREPARATORY TO THE MORE INTENSIVE TALKS WITH PRESIDENT ASAD IN GENEVA MAY 9.

-- PRESIDENT CARTER REITERATED HIS DEEP COMMITMENT TO MIDDLE EAST PEACE, AND HIS CONVICTION THAT 1977 WAS THE CRUCIAL YEAR. FOLLOWING OUR MEETINGS WITH THE MIDDLE EAST LEADERS, HE SAID, WE WOULD TRY TO ASSESS THE DIFFERENCES AND AREAS OF POSSIBLE AGREEMENT AND THEN CONSULT WITH THE GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED WITH VIEW TO SEEING HOW WE COULD HELP PARTIES ACHIEVE COMMON GROUNDS. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE ARAB COUNTRIES NOT BE DIVIDED, BUT THAT THERE ALSO BE FLEXIBILITY. AFTER OUR CONSULTATIONS WE WILL ASK THE ARABS WHETHER A COMMON POSITION CAN BE PREPARED PRIOR TO GENEVA.

-- KHADDAM STRESSED THAT SYRIA IS SERIOUS ABOUT WANTING JUST, STABLE, PERMANENT PEACE AND AN END TO THE YEARS OF CONFLICT; THIS, HE SAID, WAS A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE FROM PAST ARAB ATTITUDES.

-- IN DISCUSSING THE THREE KEY ISSUES OF BORDERS AND SECURITY, NATURE OF PEACE AND PALESTINIANS, KHADDAM SAID THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM WAS THE ESSENCE OF THE CONFLICT.

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IF IT WAS NOT SOLVED IT WOULD BE HARD TO IMAGINE ANY STABILITY IN THE AREA. THE PLO MUST GO TO GENEVA, HE SAID; UNLESS PALESTINIANS TOOK PART IN AND ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR SETTLEMENT, IT WOULD NOT BE PERMANENT. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION HE SAID THAT IF PLO REFUSED TO GO TO GENEVA THIS WOULD CREATE A NEW SITUATION. WHETHER SYRIA WOULD THEN GO WOULD BE DECIDED BY ASAD AT THE TIME. THERE MUST BE AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE ON PALESTINIAN TERRITORY WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF ALL UN RESOLUTIONS; THE QUESTION OF ITS LINKS TO JORDAN WOULD BE UP TO THE TWO TO DECIDE.

-- ON THE QUESTION OF BORDERS, KHADDAM SAID THERE COULD BE NO SURRENDER OF ARAB LAND OCCUPIED IN 1967, INCLUDING IN JERUSALEM.

-- PRESIDENT CARTER EXPLAINED THAT THE CRUCIAL ISRAELI CONCERN SEEMED TO BE THE NATURE OF PEACE--NORMALIZATION OF TRADE, TRAVEL ACROSS BORDERS, DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION.

KHADDAM REPLIED THAT PEACE SHOULD START WITH THE END OF BELLIGERENCY AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE. SUCH AN AGREEMENT WOULD BE A TURNING POINT. THE LONG YEARS OF CONFLICT HAD CREATED PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS BUT IF PEACE WAS ACHIEVED, "WE WOULD NOT GO TOWARDS WAR," THE END OF BELLIGERENCY WOULD BE A STARTING POINT. THERE WOULD BE GUARANTEES FOR EVERY SIDE.

-- THE QUESTION OF SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS WAS EXPLORED WITH KHADDAM BY SECRETARY VANCE, INCLUDING DEMILITARIZED ZONES, WARNING STATIONS, UN ELEMENTS AND ARMS LIMITATIONS. AS IN OTHER DISCUSSIONS, NO ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO REACH DECISIONS. KHADDAM EMPHASIZED HIS BELIEF THAT UN SECURITY COUNCIL GUARANTEES WERE THE MOST EFFECTIVE FORM OF SECURITY.

-- ON THE QUESTION OF HOW A GENEVA CONFERENCE MIGHT BE
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ORGANIZED, KHADDAM SAID SYRIA CONTINUED TO PREFER SINGLE ARAB DELEGATION.

2. FOR TEL AVIV: WE ARE BRIEFING ISRAELIS HERE.

3. FOR LONDON: THE BRITISH EMBASSY HERE ASKED FOR AN EARLY READ-OUT BECAUSE OF OWEN'S FORTHCOMING VISIT TO SYRIA, AND WE GAVE THEM THE GIST OF THE ABOVE APRIL 23.

4. FOR CAIRO: FOREGOING IS RESPONSIVE TO PARA. 1, CAIRO 6862. WE WILL PROVIDE YOU GUIDANCE FOR RESPONDING TO PARA. 2 BY SEPTTEL.
VANCE

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NNN

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